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February 24, 2017

Submitted by: Henry N. Talmage, Executive Director, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association, a statewide nonprofit membership organization representing 4,000 families dedicated to farming and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Senator Fonfara, Senator Frantz, Representative Rojas and members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee,

Testimony in support of:

House Bill No. 5886. AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TAX CREDIT FOR FOOD DONATED BY FARMERS TO CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS.

The Connecticut Farm Bureau supports House Bill No. 5886 because we believe that this Bill will encourage more CT farmers to donate excess fresh produce to food banks, food pantries and food security organizations. The Connecticut Farm Bureau has encouraged our members to participate in a food donation program established with Foodshare and The Connecticut Food Bank. In 2016 alone, our members donated nearly 700,000 pounds of CT grown food. Despite these impressive numbers even more donations would be possible by providing a state tax credit as proposed in HB No. 5886. Farmers, although very generous, often find it expensive and cumbersome to donate excess product. A relatively small tax credit would likely make the difference in their willingness to donate more fresh and healthy local produce. Local families in need would benefit by having fresh, local produce available which is often hard to find in food donation programs.

We believe a Connecticut food tax credit should be modeled after the Iowa Farm to Food Donation Tax Credit passed into law in 2013. This program should provide a tax credit for Connecticut farmers who donate self-produced food commodities to food banks and food pantries in an amount equaling the lesser of \$5,000 or 15% of the market value of the commodities donated during the tax year for which the credit is claimed. The credit should be available to individuals, C corporations, S corporations, partnerships and Limited Liability Companies.

The Connecticut Farm Bureau fully supports HB No. 5886 and we encourage passage of this important initiative that will benefit food-insecure families as well as farmers.